

REMARKS

Claim 1 is original. Claim 2 was previously canceled without prejudice. Claims 3-13, 15, 19, 22, 24, and 27 are previously presented. Claims 14, 16-18, 20, 21, 23, 25, and 26 are currently amended. Claims 1 and 3-27 are pending.

5

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Applicant amends claims 17, 23, 25, and 26 to address the Office's rejections under 112.

10 **Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)**

The Office rejects all of the pending claims under 102(e) based on U.S. Patent No. 6,831,756 to Ushiroda ("Ushiroda").

Applicant files concurrently herewith a Declaration under 37 C.F.R. §1.131 asserting that the invention claimed in claims 1 and 3-27 was conceived
15 and actually reduced to practice prior to the March 7th, 2000, effective priority date of Ushiroda.

For at least this reason, Applicant submits that the subject matter recited in the claims is allowable over the art of record.

Conclusion

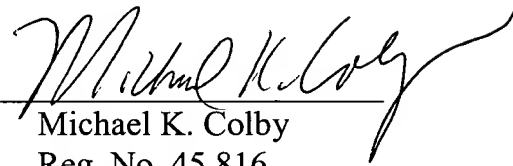
Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims.

5

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 12 Sep

By:



Michael K. Colby

Reg. No. 45,816

(509) 324-9256 ext. 240

10